

# Blue Heron

LEARNING CENTER



*A true conservationist is a person who  
knows that the world is not given by his  
fathers but borrowed from his children.*

— Audubon



### **Blue Heron Facts:**

*The Learning Center is a great place to enjoy nature. A wide variety of birds, butterflies, and wildlife visit the Learning Center year-round. The trail around the pond and through the forested wetlands provides opportunities for nature photography.*

*In 1996, two mitigated wetlands were constructed at the Learning Center to enhance water quality of the stormwater runoff from the Town of Ridgeland and the businesses at Exit 21 on I-95. Wetlands play an important role in naturally cleaning water, moderating flooding, and providing habitat for fish and wildlife.*

*The Learning Center is an urban haven for birds, animals, and people. It provides a unique educational tool and recreation opportunity.*

## **Be a part**

### **OF BLUE HERON LEARNING CENTER**

Located on 10 acres of green space at Exit 21 on I-95 in Ridgeland, the Blue Heron Learning Center offers you a chance to see blue herons, osprey, alligators, and turtles in their natural setting. Come and enjoy the songs of Carolina wrens and cardinals or the chorus of tree frogs.

Operated by the Jasper Soil & Water Conservation District, a non-profit organization, the Blue Heron Learning Center is committed to educating Jasper County's children, landowners, and residents about the importance of our natural resources. In 1996, the Jasper Soil & Water Conservation District, Jasper County, and the Town of Ridgeland began exploring the possibilities of using this unique area for environmental education and community enhancement. By 1997, the District and Town of Ridgeland were successful in securing permanent easements on 10 acres and in 1999 the District purchased  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre of adjacent property and built 4,200 sq. ft. nature/teaching center. The District believes an awareness of the inter-relationship between man and the environment is necessary for us all to become better caretakers of our natural resources.

## Education

The Learning Center's education programs include K-12 environmental science classes focusing on native habitats and wildlife, feathers & furs, field ecology, and litter and recycling education. We

also offer teacher workshops such as Action for a Cleaner Tomorrow, Ag in the Classroom, Project Learning Tree, Project WILD, and Project WET. All workshops are contingent on interest.



## Visit the Center



Visitors to the Blue Heron Learning Center can enjoy the boardwalk and trail year-round. The nature center is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm or during special events on weekends or after hours.

## Public Outreach

The District sponsors events such as the Annual Fish Pond Clinic, youth eco-camps, tours, and



open houses. We also allow other organizations to conduct workshops, training sessions, and meetings in our classroom. The Board of Commissioners must approve all outside use of the Learning Center.

The Town of Ridgeland also sponsors the Festival of Lights at the Blue Heron Learning Center during the



Christmas season. The Festival begins the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend of December and continues until the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in January.



### **DIRECTIONS**

Take exit 21 (S.R. 336) off 95, and go west on S.R. 336 (toward Ridgeland), Take a right on East Wilson Street and continue onto a dirt and gravel road. The Learning Center is on your left.



## How To Contribute

Visitors to the Blue Heron Learning Center can relax and enjoy the boardwalks, trails and nature center. In this beautiful and scenic area just minutes from I-95, visitors discover a wonderful habitat for wildlife and a spectacular laboratory for learning. After visiting, many wonder how they can get involved and become a Learning Center supporter.

The Jasper Soil & Water Conservation District is a non-profit organization and a sub-unit of state government that is governed by 5 commissioners who receive no compensation for their services.

All contributions are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. With your support, we will be able to continue to offer innovative, inspiring programs for young and old in support of our mission to promote environmental stewardship through education, public outreach and land conservation.



## Affiliate Membership Application

Our generous members have committed themselves to help us bring the Learning Center's vision to fruition. Membership will ensure that you are an important part of the SC Lowcountry's most celebrated environmental outreach and educational programs. We hope we can count on your support!

[ ] \$25-99 Fish Funder

[ ] \$100-499 Alligator Applauder

[ ] \$500 + Buck Backer

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\*All members will receive bi-annual reports and invitations to member only events.

All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Make checks payable to the Jasper Soil and Water Conservation District (JSWCD).

*Clip and mail to:*

JSWCD  
321 Bailey Lane  
Ridgeland, SC 29936



321 Bailey Lane  
Ridgeland, SC 29936  
Phone 843-726-7611  
Fax 843-726-3263

website: [www.dnr.sc.gov/conservation/districtsdnr/jasper.html](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/conservation/districtsdnr/jasper.html)  
e-mail: [jasperkab-jswcd@earthlink.net](mailto:jasperkab-jswcd@earthlink.net)

## South Carolina

*Smiling Faces. Beautiful Places.®*

Please visit the South Carolina Welcome Centers  
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